

Amendments to the Drawings:

The drawing sheets attached in connection with the above-identified application containing FIGs. 2, 3, and 12 are being presented as replacement sheets to be substituted for the previously submitted drawing sheets containing FIGs. 2, 3, and 12. The drawing FIGs. 3 and 12 have been amended.

The specific change which has been made to FIG. 3 is that the send button has been relabeled from “131” to “132”.

The specific change which has been made to FIG. 12 is that the storing medium previously labeled “24” has been relabeled as “24a”.

REMARKS

Status of Claims:

Claims 1-30 are present for examination.

Specification:

The specification has been amended to correct some minor informalities and, as further explained below, to be in conformance with the drawings. Support for the amendments to the specification can be found in FIGs. 1 and 12. No new matter has been added.

Drawings:

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character “131” has been used to designate both Input Unit and Send.

The drawing FIG. 3 has been amended. The specific change which has been made to FIG. 3 is that the send button has been relabeled from “131” to “132” in accordance with the specification at page 31, line 21. Thus, the drawings, as amended, are believed to be in compliance with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4).

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference signs mentioned in the description: 3-i (page 29), 132 (page 31), and 24a (page [42]).

The specification has been amended on page 29, paragraph beginning at line 22 to specify that 3-i is defined for any i where $(1 \leq i \leq n)$, and 3-1 to 3-n are illustrated in FIG. 1. In addition, the drawing FIG. 3 has been amended. The specific change which has been made to FIG. 3 is that the send button has been relabeled from “131” to “132” in accordance with the specification at page 31, line 21. Also, the drawing FIG. 12 has been amended. The specific change which has been made to FIG. 12 is that the storing medium previously labeled “24” has been relabeled as “24a” in accordance with the specification at page 42, line 1.

Therefore, the drawings, as amended, are believed to be in compliance with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5).

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference characters not mentioned in the description: 13-n, 14-n, 31-n, 32-n, 12-na, and 14-na.

The specification has been amended on page 25, paragraph beginning at line 13 to mention the reference characters 13-n and 14-n. The specification has been amended on page 28, paragraph beginning at line 27 to mention the reference characters 31-n and 32-n. The specification has been amended on page 40, paragraph beginning at line 1 to mention reference characters 12-na and 14-na.

Therefore, the drawings, as amended, are believed to be in compliance with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5).

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112:

Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With respect to claims 1-30, as amended, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

The claims have been amended to correct for grammatical and idiomatic errors.

The Examiner states that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation, “adds the control information” in claims 3, 6, 13, 16, 23, and 26. Independent claims 1, 4, 11, 14, 21, and 24 have been amended to recite, “corresponding control information”, and dependent claims 3, 6, 13, 16, 23, and 26 have been amended to recite, “the corresponding control information”. Thus, there is antecedent basis for the limitation “the corresponding control information” in claims 3, 6, 13, 16, 23, and 26, as amended.

The Examiner states that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation, “for portable unit” in claims 4, 14, and 24. Claims 4, 14, and 24, as amended, do not recite the limitation, “for portable unit” and, thus, the rejection is moot.

Therefore, claims 1-30, as amended, are believed to be in compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103:

Claims 1-3, 11-13, and 21-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Unold (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0055880) (hereinafter Unold).

Claims 4-8, 14-18, and 24-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Unold in view of Whiteside (U.S. Patent No. 5,835,861) (hereinafter Whiteside).

Claims 9, 19, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Unold in view of Whiteside, and further in view of Giraud (U.S. Patent No. 5,966,696) (hereinafter Giraud).

Claims 10, 20, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Unold in view of Whiteside and further in view of Hollenberg (U.S. Patent No. 6,091,956) (hereinafter Hollenberg).

With respect to claims 1-30, as amended, the rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicant is submitting herewith a verified English translation of applicant’s Japanese priority document number JP 2000-142298. JP ‘298 was filed on May 10, 2000, and, thus, antedates the filing date of the Unold reference of March 26, 2001. The Unold reference claims priority to Provisional Application No. 60/192,043, filed March 24, 2000, (hereinafter Unold Provisional). As such, only the subject matter of Unold Provisional is prior art with respect to the present application.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites a shop information advertisement panel system, comprising:

“a plurality of shop terminals;

an advertisement panel control terminal connected with the plurality of shop terminals through a communication network, said advertisement panel control terminal including an advertisement information storing unit; and

a plurality of advertisement panel devices;

wherein each shop terminal of said plurality of shop terminals is configured to send, to the advertisement panel control terminal through the communication network, respective image information of a respective advertisement image to be displayed on a corresponding advertisement panel device of said plurality of advertisement panel devices;

wherein said advertisement panel control terminal is configured to receive said respective image information of the respective advertisement image from each shop terminal of said plurality of shop terminals, and is configured to store said respective image information in said advertisement information storing unit in correspondence with corresponding control information identifying the corresponding advertisement panel device on which the respective advertisement image is to be displayed; and

wherein said advertisement panel control terminal is configured to read particular image information of a particular advertisement image from said advertisement information storing unit, and is configured to determine a particular advertisement panel device of said plurality of advertisement panel devices on which said particular advertisement image is to be displayed based on particular control information that is in correspondence with said particular image information, and is configured to control the particular advertisement panel device to display the particular advertisement image.” (Emphasis Added).

A shop information advertisement panel system including the above-quoted features has at least the advantages that: (i) each shop terminal of a plurality of shop terminals is configured to send, to an advertisement panel control terminal through a communication network, respective image information of a respective advertisement image to be displayed on a corresponding advertisement panel device of a plurality of advertisement panel devices; (ii) the advertisement panel control terminal is configured to store the respective image information received from each of the plurality of shop terminals in an advertisement information storing unit of the advertisement panel control terminal; (iii) the advertisement panel control terminal is configured to read particular image information of a particular advertisement image from the advertisement information storing unit; and (iv) the

advertisement panel control terminal is configured to control a particular advertisement panel device to display the particular advertisement image. (Specification; page 3, line 5 to page 4, line 9; page 25, line 4 to page 30, line 13; abstract; FIG. 1).

Unold Provisional neither discloses nor suggests a shop information advertisement panel system including the above-quoted features for at least the following three reasons.

First, the system of Unold Provisional does not have a plurality of shop terminal where each shop terminal of the plurality of shop terminals is configured to send, to an advertisement panel control terminal through a communication network, respective image information of a respective advertisement image to be displayed on a corresponding advertisement panel device of a plurality of advertisement panel devices. The system of Unold Provisional includes a plurality of ad hosts 112, an object server 102, and a plurality of object browsers 108. (Unold Provisional; FIG. 1; page 6, line 17 to page 8, line 21). However, the plurality of ad hosts 112 in the system of Unold Provisional do not send advertisements to the object server 102. Instead, the ad hosts 112 in the system of Unold Provisional must connect to the Internet and operate as a “web host” with an assigned URL to host and serve advertisements to the object browsers 108. (Unold Provisional; page 10, lines 16-23; page 17, lines 20-23; page 24, lines 13-14; page 26, lines 3-8). Since the ad hosts 112 in the system of Unold Provisional do not send advertisements to the object server 102, the ad hosts 112 must be enabled as “web hosts” to serve advertisements to the object browsers 108 each time an advertisement is to be displayed. (Unold Provisional; page 10, lines 16-23; page 17, lines 20-23; page 24, lines 13-14; page 26, lines 3-8).

Second, the system of Unold Provisional does not have an advertisement panel control terminal that is configured to store respective image information received from each of a plurality of shop terminals in an advertisement information storing unit of the advertisement panel control terminal. The object server 102 in the system of Unold Provisional does not store advertisements to be displayed on the object browsers 108. Instead, in the system of Unold Provisional, the object server 102 only stores telecom addresses of the ad hosts 112 and then provides the telecom addresses to the object browsers 108. (Unold Provisional; page 12, lines 17-19; page 36, line 16 to page 37, line 12; FIG. 10). The object browsers 108

in the system of Unold Provisional must then use the telecom addresses to connect to the ad hosts 112, which act as web hosts, to receive advertisements to be displayed. (Unold Provisional; FIG. 10).

Third, the system of Unold Provisional does not have an advertisement panel control terminal that is configured to read particular image information of a particular advertisement image from an advertisement information storing unit. As discussed above, the object server 102 in the system of Unold Provisional never even receives advertisements from the ad hosts 112. Thus, the object server 102 in the system of Unold Provisional does not read advertisements from a storing unit of the object server 102, because the object server 102 in the system of Unold Provisional never even stores advertisements to be displayed on the object browsers 108. (Unold Provisional; page 11, line 4 to page 12, line 23).

Therefore, independent claim 1, as amended, is neither disclosed nor suggested by the Unold Provisional reference and, hence, is believed to be allowable.

Independent claim 4 recites a shop information advertisement panel system with features similar to features of a shop information advertisement panel system of independent claim 1 and, thus, is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 1 is believed to be allowable. In addition, Whiteside does not cure the deficiencies with respect to the teaching of Unold Provisional noted above, because the system of Whiteside does not even have an advertisement panel control terminal. Therefore, independent claim 4, as amended, is neither disclosed nor suggested by the Unold Provisional and Whiteside references and, hence, is believed to be allowable. The Patent Office has not made out a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103.

Independent claim 11 recites a shop information advertisement method with features similar to features of a shop information advertisement panel system of independent claim 1 and, thus, is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 1 is believed to be allowable.

Independent claim 14 recites a shop information advertisement method with features similar to features of a shop information advertisement panel system of independent claim 4

and, thus, is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 4 is believed to be allowable.

Independent claim 21 recites a computer readable memory storing a program for controlling a shop information advertisement panel system to perform a process with features similar to features of a shop information advertisement panel system of independent claim 1 and, thus, is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 1 is believed to be allowable.

Independent claim 24 recites a computer readable memory storing a program for controlling a shop information advertisement panel system to perform a process with features similar to features of a shop information advertisement panel system of independent claim 4 and, thus, is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 4 is believed to be allowable.

The dependent claims are deemed allowable for at least the same reasons indicated above with regard to the independent claims from which they depend. It is noted that, with respect to claims 9, 19, and 29, Giraud does not cure the deficiencies with regard to the teachings of Unold Provisional and Whiteside discussed above. Also, it is noted that, with respect to claims 10, 20, and 30, Hollenberg does not cure the deficiencies with regard to the teachings of Unold Provisional and Whiteside discussed above.

Conclusion:

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or

even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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